

MAGAZINE FEATURES

THE NEWS SCIMITAR

DAILY COMIC PAGE

WHO'S TO BLAME

BY
ETHEL LLOYD PATTERSON.

It takes more than a marriage ceremony to make an adle-pated girl into a thrift wife.

CHAPTER 77.

Freddie was not feeling very well. He refused to admit it to himself, and he certainly would have denied hotly that he was ill had anyone made inquiries. But the truth of the matter was he was feeling very bad all day and was getting neither fresh air nor proper food in the evening. Like most strong boys who are used to athletics and simple, good dinners, he began rapidly to wilt under the "hot-house" treatment. His father noticed it and it made his heart ache.

"Feel all right, Partner?" he asked Freddie one evening as his son was about to leave the office and take the subway uptown.

"Why, of course, sir. Yes," said Freddie.

"Oh—thought you looked off your feed," his father told him; apparently casual.

"Never felt better in my life!" lied Freddie.

"Right—O!" said Mr. Mason, and down the line he trotted and "mash" heart.

"My son! My son! If only I could hear the suffering and the disappointment of my son!"

And to himself as he made his way home—Freddie said: "Let dad know how much I miss him and—mother! He'd think maybe it was Estrella's fault and—firmly and loyally to himself—'and it is!'"

However, he let himself into his apartment on Riverside drive with no special thrill of pleasure. Already he had been taught that the pretty, dainty and smiling wife awaiting a man in his cozy and comfortable home was probably a myth. At least thus far the picture had been a mirage.

Tonight as he entered their little sitting room—or "parlor," as she preferred to call it—found Estrella had saved the couch. She was draping a skirt "the new way." She had found a wooden soap box and this was upside down on the couch cushions. Tettering precariously upon it stood Estrella.

With the aid of this device she was able to see herself in the one large mirror over the mantle. Freddie knew better than to greet her too ardently when she was thus employed. Instead he walked carefully across the room and touched her outstretched hand with his lips. She did not even glance at him. She was considering her reflection in the mirror; her head on one side.

"Dinner ready?" said Freddie.

"I guess so," his bride told him. "Ask Sarah's she's right there."

Freddie went into the tiny hall where he could hear the maid moving about at the kitchenette.

"Excuse Sarah," said he. "Will I have time to change my clothes before dinner?"

"You sir," she said. "I'm ready to put the soup on the table."

"All right," Freddie told her. "I'll just wash and be with you in two shakes of a lamb's tail."

He disappeared into the bathroom. In another moment he opened the door and put his head out.

"Anyone seen my nail brush?" he called.

There was a deadly pause.

Sarah stood frozen into a statue of soul.

Freddie stepped from the bathroom.

"Say, Sweetie," he said to Estrella; "did you put my nail brush and my bath brush away?"

Estrella contemplated another fold she just had made in her skirt before she answered. Then—

"No, I didn't put 'em away," she said slowly. "I gave them to Sarah for scrubbing."

"Oh, my goodness!" protested Freddie; "not my good English brushes?"

"I don't know whether they were English or Chinese," said his bride; "I gave 'em to Sarah."

"Oh!" began poor Freddie; "I do think—"

"Oh, my heavens!" said Estrella; "I'll buy you a couple more tomorrow at the ten-cent store, 'old time wad!'"

"At the ten-cent store?" groaned Freddie. "I paid \$7 for that bath brush and \$3 something for the other! Gee whiz, Sweetie—I know you didn't mean it, but—"

Estrella jumped down from her throne and shook out her skirts.

"Well," she observed, "you can just make up your mind you won't get any more like that—though I don't believe you paid any \$7 for your old bath brush. If you did, you're a fool. You might as well learn right straight now that such things are nonsense. Seven dollars, indeed! No wonder we have to live in a two-room flat."

"Mother gave me the money to buy them two years ago," said Freddie slowly. "She was always saying brushes were part of decent living. They'd have lasted forever."

"Oh, do be still about them!" broke in Estrella. "The brushes are gone! You spend all your time scrubbing in that old bathroom, anyway!"

Poor Freddie, for the first time since he had been a little boy, he wanted to put his head down and just—cry!

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So with his front paws, which are just made for digging, Uncle Wiggily began scraping away the dirt from the sassafras roots.

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"Why! Oh, trolley cars! Talk about appetite! Why you've given me mustard, not sassafras, and away he ran to the spring of cool water to cool his burning tongue and he didn't get the bunny that time."

"I guess I forgot to tell him he ought to boil the sassafras roots before eating them," said Uncle Wiggily with a laugh, and he went on with his digging. Then he took the roots home to Nurse Jane, made some sassafras tea for her, and the muskrat lady was soon all well again. So everything came out all right, and if our cat's tail doesn't tickle the goldfish and make it jump into the parrot's cage while he is singing the riddle to sleep I'll tell you next about Uncle Wiggily and Old Dod Perival.

"No trouble at all!" laughed the jolly bunny gentleman. "Maybe I'll have an adventure while digging the sassafras."

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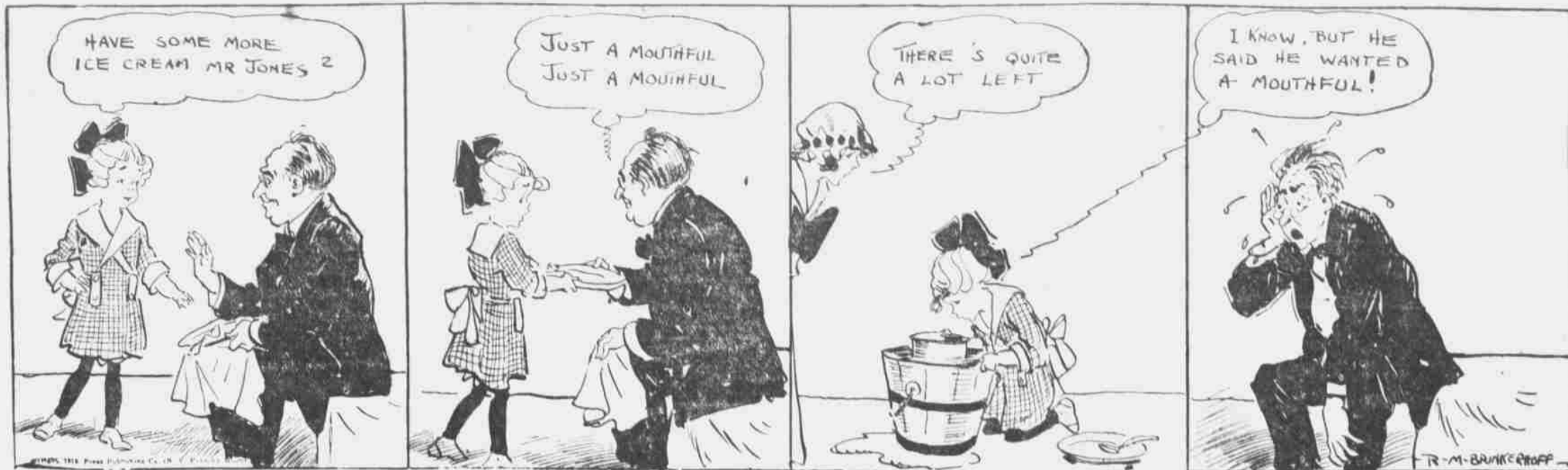
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LITTLE MARY MIXUP—Is This a Reflection, or a Compliment?



THE BIG LITTLE FAMILY—Not, of Course, Counting the Cats!



JOE'S CAR—Joe Discovers That the Book Is Correct!



UNCLE WIGGILY AND THE SASSAFRAS.

(Copyright, 1919, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

BY HOWARD R. GARIS.

Well, I feel like eating from breakfast of broiled birch lollipops with honey gravy this morning," cried Uncle Wiggily. Long after the bunny rabbit gentleman, as he is known, had left his hollow stump bungalow one day.

Quickly dressing himself, the bunny hopped down stairs to the breakfast room, calling on his way:

"What ho, Nurse Jane! I am all ready to eat!"

But there was no nice Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzly, the muskrat lady housekeeper in the kitchen setting breakfast. Nor was she out in front of the bungalow, sweeping the porch or woodlawn as she sometimes did.

"Why, this is queer!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "Nurse Jane not up yet? She must be ill."

So he called:

"What's the matter, Miss Fuzzy Wuzzly? Don't you want me to have any breakfast this fine day?"

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily! I'm so sorry!" came a voice from Nurse Jane's room. "But I am so ill with a headache that I can not get up and cook your breakfast. If you could only make me a cup of sassafras tea I might soon be better."

"Sassafras tea! Of course I'll make you a cup!" cried the bunny gentleman. "You shall have two cups, if you need them. Don't worry. I can get my own breakfast and make your sassafras tea also."

So Uncle Wiggily went to the cupboard, like Old Mother Hubbard, but not to get a poor dog's bone. He was looking for some sassafras roots that he might boil them and make tea for Nurse Jane.

But there were no sassafras roots in the whole hollow stump bungalow.

"Nurse Jane!" Uncle Wiggily called upstairs, when he had gotten himself a cup of carrot coffee and a bit of corn bread. "Nurse Jane, we are all out of sassafras roots for tea. I shall have to hop out in the woods and dig some. I want to be a spring of cool water to cool his burning tongue and he didn't get the bunny that time."

"Oh, I'm sorry to give you so much trouble," said the ill muskrat lady housekeeper.

"No trouble at all!" laughed the jolly bunny gentleman. "Maybe I'll have an adventure while digging the sassafras."

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